

## Werk

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## Editorial note

*Turkic Languages, Volume 10, 2006, Number 2*

With the present issue, the journal TURKIC LANGUAGES completes its tenth volume and can thus celebrate a small anniversary before embarking on an interesting new decade.

This issue contains articles on a number of different problems of Turkic linguistics.

Nathan Light's long contribution represents a kind of linguistic research that has so far got little or no attention in our journal. It is a process-oriented analysis of the 8th century text of the Tonyukuk inscription, a complex historical narrative about knowledge, communication, planning and action. The author attempts to show how the narrator arranges and coordinates information transitions within narrated events and narrative events. The analysis is meant to improve our understanding of the narrator's intentions, to clarify the relationship of the text to its historical context, and thus also to improve the translation of the text.

In a shorter paper on an etymological problem, László Károly suggests that the Yakut denominal suffix *-Sxt*, which forms designations of diseases from designations of body parts, goes back to the noun *sit* 'smell, odour, decay', corresponding to East Old Turkic *yī:ð*. The author outlines a plausible way in which this free lexical element could have developed into a suffix.

Julian Rentzsch's paper concerns the functions of actionality operators in modern Uyghur. These postverbal constructions, which consist of a lexical verb in a converb form and a following auxiliary verb, are grammatical devices conveying actional meanings and influencing the phase structure of the actional phrase, the operandum of viewpoint aspect operators; cf. L. Johanson, "On Turkic transformativizers and nontransformativizers", *Turkic Languages* 8, 180-190. The topic has been dealt with before in meritorious ways by W.-E. Scharlipp (*Auxiliarfunktionen von Hauptverben nach Konverb in der neuuigurischen Schriftsprache von Sinkiang*, 1984), R. F. Hahn (*Spoken Uyghur*, 1991) and A. Yakup (*The Turfan dialect of Uyghur*, 2005). Thanks to a highly systematic approach, Rentzsch manages to shed more light upon the functions of the inventory of Uyghur postverbal constructions.

Teija Greed's paper deals with Tatar converb clauses and their argument structure. All converbs have typical syntactic functions, though these functions can also overlap. Semantically non-modifying converb clauses are an important device used in Tatar discourse to carry forward the narration. In specific contexts they can be interpreted as being of equal narrative value with the event represented by the main verb. In sentences containing a semantically modifying converb clause, a coreferential subject gets zero expression in the converb clause and is explicit only in the main clause. In sentences containing a semantically non-modifying converb clause, how-

ever, the coreferential subject precedes the converb, thus indicating that the events expressed by the verbs are of equal narrative value.

Z. Ceyda Arslan-Kechriotis investigates the semantics of the so-called 'Perfect' and the ways its meanings are expressed in Turkish. It has been assumed that 'Perfect' is a hybrid category whose dual character encompasses both temporal and aspectual properties. The author argues that Turkish does not have a special marker reserved for this category, though it has means of expressing its semantics. The perfect interpretation results from the interaction of temporal, aspectual, and modal markers and adverbials in the semantic module of the grammar.

Geoffrey Haig's review article "Turkish verbs in theory and practice" deals with a collective volume on the Turkish verb edited by Eser Erguvanlı Taylan with contributions by the editor herself, Engin Sezer, Guglielmo Cinque, Gerjan van Schaaijk, Mine Nakipoğlu-Demiralp, Aşlı Göksel, Jaklin Kornfilt, A. Sumru Özsoy and Balkız Öztürk.

Christoph Schroeder and Martin Strohmeier report on a workshop convened to discuss proposals that might contribute to the establishment of "Turkish as a Foreign Language" in the Republic of Cyprus in a way that addresses the specific local situation and meets the standards of foreign language teaching as developed by the Council of Europe. Accepting the challenge of the local particularities in combination with a European orientation would also mean that "Turkish as a Foreign Language" in Cyprus would accept a role in the development of friendly relations between the Greek and the Turkish communities and in the development of intercultural competences.

Turkic studies have suffered another severe loss this year. On May 29, 2006, Professor Omeljan Pritsak died from heart failure at the age of 87 years in Boston, Massachusetts. Born on April 7, 1919 in Luka (now Ozerne), Eastern Galicia, he first studied with the founder of the Institute of Oriental Studies in Kiev, the famous Ukrainian Orientalist Agatangel Kryms'kyj, probably as the last student of this great scholar, who was shortly afterwards imprisoned and executed (1942). Pritsak completed his Turcological training at Berlin with Annemarie von Gabain, and subsequently spent a number of years at the universities of Göttingen and Hamburg. In 1962, Omeljan Pritsak accepted an invitation to the United States, where he was professor of Turcology and Linguistics at Harvard University from 1964 to 1989. He was also the co-founder and first director (1973-1989) of the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute. After his retirement from Harvard University, Professor Pritsak returned to Kiev to re-establish Kryms'kyj's old Institute of Oriental Studies, and became its first director (1990). Pritsak is probably best known for his studies on the origin and history of Kievan Rus'. The readers of *TURKIC LANGUAGES* may be more familiar with his numerous seminal contributions to Turcology and Altaistics.

*Lars Johanson*